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Chile Report Leak Irks Senators

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee has assumed charge of the investigation of the CIA-Chile controversy and is expected to come up with a much more bland viewpoint than that of the multinational corporations subcommittee legal staff.

Many members of the full committee reacted with outrage at the "confidential" report from Jerry Levinson to Subcommittee Chairman Frank Church, D-Idaho, which was leaked to the Star-News, The Washington Post, and The New York Times at least 24 hours before most of the senators had seen a copy.

It was difficult to detect whether the indignation was directed at the leak or the contents of the Levinson report. Levinson's recommendations had the flavor of an indictment, charging Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger with deceit and calling for reopening of his confirmation hearings; former CIA Director Richard Helms and former Assistant Secretary of State Charles A. Myer with perjury and recommending a contempt citation against former Ambassador to Chile Edward Korry.

Kissinger said last night at a party honoring retiring Sens. George Aiken and Sam Ervin:

"It's nonsense. But if the President and the Senate want me to testify, I will."

Meanwhile Kissinger met with President Ford yesterday and the White House said later the secretary of state was assured that he would not be replaced as principal presidential adviser on national security.

As assistant for national security Kissinger, among other duties, directs the interdepartmental 40 Committee, whose approval is required before the CIA can undertake a major covert operation.

Committee members, reacting to the Levinson recommendation, seemed united in expressing their concern over the leak.

"I'm too mad to talk," said Sen. Hugh Scott, R-Pa. Even Church, whose criticism of the U.S. policy toward Chile is unqualified, acknowledged, "We all felt indignation about the leaks."

WHILE DENYING that the committee had stripped the subcommittee of its mandate to pursue the CIA-Chile affair further, Church said, "The committee has set aside those conclusions (of Levinson) and voted to conduct an investigation of its own."

Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., the lame-duck chairman of the full committee, said the panel ordered its staff to gather all relevant material and report next week. Fulbright said committee staff chief Pat M. Holt would be in charge of the investigation. Fulbright, too, was critical of the leaks and said the staff of the subcommittee has no business putting out such a document.

Fulbright said the committee will decide whether it wants to recall Kissinger for another round of questioning on CIA operations in Chile after it receives the Holt Report. Fulbright said it would cause him no problem to preside over a hearing with Kissinger in the witness chair even though

inger as ambassador to Britain after January.

The committee's problem with the Levinson report seems to be that at least some of the hitherto secret

information about activities of the CIA in Chile, authorized by the "40 Committee" at the White House under Kissinger, had been told to committee members long before public disclosure of the details last week.

It was developed in the Levinson report that Kissinger gave some details of the Chile operation against Marxist President Salvador Allende last September that were previously held in secrecy.

The deleted part of Kissinger's testimony that is part of the committee transcript reads, "The CIA was heavily involved in 1964 in the election, was in a very minor way involved in the 1970 election and since then we have stayed absolutely away from any coups. Our efforts in Chile were to strengthen the democratic political parties and give them a basis for winning in 1976, which we expressed our hope was that Allende could be defeated in a free democratic election (sic)."

LEVINSON'S report found this Kissinger statement misleading and contends there was more than minor involvement. Furthermore, CIA Director William Colby testified before the Western Hemisphere subcommittee of the Fulbright committee last November and evidently admitted the CIA had done more than merely keep

alive a democratic political opposition in Chile.

The dilemma for the full committee is that it already had received testimony to some extent of CIA activities in Chile and could hardly react as indignantly as if it was hearing this for the first time in the letter of Rep. Michael J. Harrington, D-Mass, detailing these activities.

FULBRIGHT and Church left no doubt that they find it difficult to exercise restraint on the CIA. Fulbright said he agreed with Harrington that there should be a joint committee to oversee CIA activities but admitted there were not enough votes to establish this system.

President Ford tried to field the CIA-Chile ball at his press conference and fumbled. He said the U.S. effort was to prevent Allende from destroying opposition news media. The fact is that Allende, much as he might have wished it, never managed to put a single newspaper out of business. Since the Sept. 11, 1973, military coup, which resulted in Allende's death, every opposition newspaper in Chile has been eliminated.

Correspondents in Chile during Allende's nearly three years well remember that the press, both for and against the regime, was wildly free to the point of total irresponsibility once they got over their apprehension about Allende's ability to molest them.

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